

KEESLER NEWS

Keesler Air Force Base
Biloxi, Mississippi

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Develop America's Airmen today ... for tomorrow

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Keesler News on Web:
<http://www.keesler.af.mil>

Capasso: Taking care of people No. 1

'We need to bring normalcy back into lives' at Keesler

By Susan Griggs
Keesler News staff

The 81st Training Wing's new commander is thinking "outside of the box" to tackle Keesler's post-Katrina challenges in creative and productive ways.

Brig. Gen. Paul Capasso, who assumed command Nov. 15, says his common sense and enthusiasm are the two main qualities he brings to his new position at Keesler.

"I love what I do," General Capasso remarked. "It's the obligation of duty — it's the pleasure of working and taking care of people. That's what makes it fun. Every new assignment brings new challenges. When you're working with the cream of the crop, the best individuals in the world, it's always fun."

"I've traveled all over the world, and I've met a lot of people," said the general. "When you ask folks the best

thing about their assignments, the answer is always the same — it's the people."

Taking care of Keesler's people is the main ingredient in the general's formula for keeping the base on its path to recovery after the devastation of the Aug. 29 hurricane.

"You can talk about mission, you can talk about recovery, you can talk about community outreach, but to do it all takes people," General Capasso said. "If you're not taking care of people, you're not going to get the job done — that's the bottom line."

He said his most pressing task is taking care of the Keesler workforce whose lives have been disrupted since Katrina.

"We need to focus on bringing normalcy back into the lives of this community. Much of our civilian workforce housing needs have

Please see **Capasso**, Page 9



Photo by Kemberly Groue

Airman 1st Class Christopher Lenz, 332nd Training Squadron, shakes hands with Brig. Gen. Paul Capasso, new 81st Training Wing commander, at the change of command Nov. 15.

Couple's honeymoon on hold

By Senior Airman Sarah Stegman
Keesler News staff

Although the honeymoon is on hold, leaving the shelter of Wolfe Hall after Hurricane Katrina remains a special time in one Keesler couple's lives.

"The moment LaVerne and I were released from the shelter (Sept. 3), we were married," said Master Sgt. Daryn McMullen, 335th Training Squadron, of the ceremony outside the shelter. "Our wedding turned out totally awesome."

Since then, like many other Keesler people, the newlyweds have been involved in humanitarian relief operations along the

Mississippi Gulf Coast.

"We've mainly been helping folks around our own (Ocean Springs) neighborhood," Sergeant McMullen explained.

There's been no honeymoon so far, but Sergeant McMullen said plans are in the works for a vacation next year.

The McMullens' goal for 2006 and beyond is to "grow stonger together in our marriage while continuing to learn more about each other."

"Only God knows what our future holds; we pray it means spending the rest of our lives happily together," the sergeant said.



Photo by Kemberly Groue

McMullens — Keesler's Katrina couple.

COMMENTARY

Successful holiday season — key is safety as priority

By Brig. Gen. Paul Capasso

81st Training Wing commander

With the holidays upon us, I want to once again thank Team Keesler for all the hard work you've been doing in recent weeks in an effort to return our base back to normal.

In light of the effects of Hurricane Katrina, this year's holiday season takes on a new and different meaning for each of us. One thing is for sure: this is a time to reflect on our blessings and be truly thankful for what we have.

During this year's busy holidays, I'd like everyone to enjoy the season with their family and friends to the fullest. Part of making the most of our time off is to keep safety in the forefront of our celebrations. I want to stress that constantly being aware of your surroundings and taking proper measures to ensure you and yours are safe is of the utmost importance. A little caution and planning go a long way.

If you're going out of town, pre-plan your trip to reduce stress. Include rest stops to reduce fatigue, and most importantly, don't drink and drive.

There's no reason we can't make the most of the season, and keep ourselves and those we love safe as well.

For those staying on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, remember we have people from all over the country here helping in the recovery

efforts. They most likely aren't familiar with traffic patterns or posted speed limits. So give a stranger a Christmas present: be patient.

Being aware of safety issues is everyone's responsibility. In getting this message out, supervisors must be engaged with their troops and make sure they know safety is our main priority this holiday season. The wingman culture we foster in the Air Force is all about safety, and it should be emphasized at every opportunity.

Make sure that your co-workers know you're concerned with their safety — there's nothing wrong with letting your buddy know you care. It's all a part of the holiday spirit, but most importantly, it's the right thing to do.

A sad fact to note is more Americans have died in traffic accidents than in all the wars we've fought. Making the decision to be safety-minded is the way to avoid becoming a statistic.

During the holidays, we should all do our best to enjoy ourselves. Remaining aware of safety issues is one sure way to make the best of the season.

I send everyone on Team Keesler my warmest holiday greetings, and wish everyone a safe and successful time off. Success during this year's holiday season can only be defined as "no loss of life."

Freedom

All of us must define it for ourselves

By Staff Sgt. Thomas Brick

332nd Expeditionary Contracting Flight

BALAD Air Base, Iraq — Freedom is a hard concept to define at times.

Many would say freedom is yours at birth, that you're born free with the same rights as everyone else. The creator may have wanted it that way, but reality is much different.

Freedom is something you have to want for yourself. It's something you have to define for yourself.

When we're born we aren't free because we're unable to do anything for our-

selves. As we move from adolescence into adulthood, we start to learn what freedom is. It's when we start making decisions for ourselves, but this freedom isn't without a price — living with the consequences of each action we take and each word we utter.

To me, freedom isn't just a label or a right that politicians tout on a stage in front of supporters. It's that state of control over your own destiny. That's why freedom is worth fighting for, worth dying for. Because it's so

precious and fragile, it must be defended and held tight from those who'd take it away.

Many people take this for granted. They're blissfully unaware of the fortune our founding fathers have left for us.

I love my freedom, which is why I joined the Air Force. I'm happy to defend my freedoms and those of the American citizens. I'm also happy to fight so people from other nations can enjoy the same freedoms we do.

ACTION LINE ... 377-4357

By Brig. Gen. Paul Capasso

81st Training Wing commander

First, try to work concerns through the proper chain of command. When you've exhausted this recourse, turn to the commander's action line for assistance.

We welcome any suggestions to help make this a more valuable and useful tool. You may call the commander's action line at 377-4357, write to Commander's Action Line, 81 TRW/PA, Keesler AFB, MS 39534-2603, e-mail 81 TRW Commander's Action Line (on-base) or commanders.line@keesler.af.mil (off-base). For a personal response, include your name, address and phone number.

Items of general interest may appear in this column.

Where's my medical care?

Comment — I'm a patient in internal medicine.

I don't understand how Keesler can deploy doctors to places like Pakistan when we have a disaster right here.

Response — Fortunately, we've been able to set up temporary services for our beneficiaries.

For services that aren't available, beneficiaries are referred to Tricare network providers.

Despite Hurricane Katrina, the medical center continues to have a deployment mission. Deploying certain individuals also enables us to keep them assigned here and current in their specialties. It's also true that because of the extensive damage to the medical center, many of our providers don't have offices or treatment rooms.

Disciplinary tools taken away

Comment — I'm a 335th Training Squadron instructor.

I was just informed instructors and instructor supervisors can no longer issue letters of counseling or reprimand in the classroom.

How are we supposed to maintain control without these tools?

Response — The revised Air Education and Training Command Instruction 36-2216, paragraph 6.2.4, states "Squadron, detachment and geographically separated unit commanders will be the issuing authority for letters of reprimand."

Commanders may delegate this authority to light commanders, section commanders or first sergeants. Unless the offense immediately warrants stronger discipline, other corrective measures, such as verbal counseling, phase back or delay, training sessions and correctional custody should be used before advancing to formally-documented actions.

Our mission through technical and military training is to prepare Airmen for their duties and responsibilities in the operational Air Force. We must also ensure our disciplinary techniques are fair and representative of those used in the operational Air Force to help prevent unduly harsh punishment.

This change doesn't prevent instructors and instructor supervisors from disciplining Airmen. Academic difficulties should be documented on AETC IMT 173, Student Record of Academic/Non-academic Counseling. This form may also be used by instructors and their supervisors to document minor disciplinary infractions, such as talking or sleeping in class, where the behavior disrupts the academic environment. Instructors and instructor supervisors may also use AETC IMT 341, Excellent/Discrepancy Report.

If a student commits an egregious act, the instructor or instructor supervisor should get the academic flight commander, military training flight commander or flight chief involved.

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CORRECTION

An article in the Dec. 1 issue of the Keesler News about the 81st Training Support Squadron's Team Excellence Award winners incorrectly identified the term "rapid execution and combat targeting."

TRAINING AND EDUCATION



Eighteen Keesler firefighters were trained in trench rescue training Nov. 29-30 in the Pinehaven housing area. The training focused on extremely dangerous situations surrounding below-surface rescue operations involving major entanglements. An improperly trained rescuer can easily become a victim if proper procedures aren't followed.



A structure is prepared to keep a wall from collapsing by using knowledge of different angle concepts and specific nail patterns to ensure strength.



Photos by Kemberly Groue
Chad Martin, left, and David Tenace, 81st Civil Engineer Squadron civilian firefighters, build a brace to shore walls from collapsing inside a building during structural collapse training. The training was conducted by specialized rescue instructors from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's urban search and rescue team, Dec. 1 through Friday.

Trenches, collapsing buildings No problem for Keesler firefighters



Firefighters Cole Ballard, left, and Staff Sgt. Stephen Crandall arrange a strut for installation during trench rescue training Nov. 30. Trench rescue is used to remove victims buried during digging or excavation



Firefighters practice shoring the fire training facility Friday as part of the 11-day training.

Radio instructor ends 56 years of federal service

By Susan Griggs

Keesler News staff

Manuel Moreno first set foot on Keesler soil 56 years ago as a young airman straight out of technical training.

Wednesday, the 336th Training Squadron honors the master instructor as he retires from federal service.

Mr. Moreno, a trainer in the communication and information basic radio operator course, has been responsible for teaching pipeline students and retrainees on basic operations, graduating more than 150 students each year.

"The Air Force taught me many valuable lessons," Mr. Moreno said. "I didn't start out to make it a career, but I have no regrets. People in today's Air Force have it made — there are so many more opportunities for personal and professional advancement."

The Arizona native joined the Air Force in 1948. His military service included positions as a communications operations training instructor, a telecommunications equipment operator, a language specialist, an administration and program specialist and a ground radio electronics mechanic.

In his 25 years of active duty, he was stationed at Keesler twice, as well as Kimpo and Pusan Air Bases, Korea; Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M.; Warren AFB, Wyo.; Scott AFB, Ill.; England AFB, La.; Torrejon and Moron ABs, Spain; McConnell AFB, Kan.; Army Air Force Ryukyu Island, Japan, and McClellan AFB, Calif.

Mr. Moreno spent his entire 31-year civil service career at Keesler. His initial job as a ground radio electronics mechanic was followed by five years as a communications



Mr. Moreno

operations instructor, six years as a military personnel instructor and 14 years in his current position.

His awards include the Superior Performance Award, Air Force Service Longevity Award, Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, Air Force Good Conduct Medal, United Nations Service Medal and Vietnam Service Medal.

Mr. Moreno and his wife, Doris, have been married for 53 years. One of his daughters, Jane Dodson, is a training specialist in the 335th TRS. He has one son, Mark, and two other daughters, Donna Szkolnik and Patricia Baker.

His retirement plans include completing house repairs and working in the garden at his home in Pass Christian, which sustained significant damage during Hurricane Katrina.

"We're staying here," Mr. Moreno said. "People in this area have a tenacity that doesn't exist anywhere else. They stick together like glue."

He also wants to pursue his hobby of flying radio-controlled unmanned air vehicles.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION NOTES

Grants increase

General Henry H. Arnold Education Grants have been increased to \$2,000 by the Air Force Aid Society.

Children of active duty, retirees, Title 10 reservists on extended active duty, Title 32 performing full-time active duty and deceased Air Force members are eligible to apply. Spouses of active duty, Title 10 reservists residing and attending school in the continental United States and widows and widowers of active duty and retirees.

Applications are available at the family support center, Room 118, old Cody Hall. The application deadline is March 10.

Testing resumes

Testing has resumed for all programs administered by the education office.

Make appointments in Room 212, old Cody Hall or call 377-2323 or 2171.

Testing is in Room 118, Airman Leadership School, 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. Monday-Thursday.

Civilian tuition aid

College tuition assistance is available for permanent civil service employees at Keesler.

Courses must be mission (job) related and through accredited schools.

For more information, call or visit the education office, 377-2323, Room 212, old Cody Hall.

CCAF online

Visit the Air Force Virtual Education Center, <https://www.my.af.mil/afvecprod>, to create My-AFVEC accounts to access online customer service tools.

With the tools, people can request Community College of the Air Force transcripts, track receipt of civilian transcripts, view degree progress reports and check if a course counts toward a CCAF degree.

Physician assistants

Phase I physician assistant training classes begin in January, April and August 2007.

Completed applications must be sent by military personnel flights and arrive by Jan. 27 at HQ AFPC/DPAMW, 550 C Street West, Suite 27, Randolph

AFB, TX 78150-4729.

For more information, call the military personnel flight or education office or visit <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/medical/BSC/Education/PAapplication.htm>.

Virtual education

The Air Force Virtual Education Center has been transferred to the Air Force Portal.

To access AFVEC, use the AFVEC URL, <https://afvec.langley.af.mil>, or go directly to the Air Force Portal, <https://www.my.af.mil/afvecprod>. Use your Air Force Portal user identification and password to log on.

First-time users are prompted to re-register some of their profile information and then are taken directly into their AFVEC profile.

CCAF postponement

The fall Community College of the Air Force graduation is being combined with the spring ceremony.

The postponement is due to the impact of Hurricane Katrina.

For more information, call Becky Green, education office, 377-2323.

Troops to Teachers

For information on Mississippi Troops to Teachers, call Chris Carey, 1-800-MISS-TEACH.

Officer records

For officers to update their academic records, the Air Force Institute of Technology requires an official transcript sent to this address:

AFIT/RRE, 2950 P St., Wright-Patterson AFB OH 45433-7765.

Enlisted-to-AFIT

WASHINGTON — The Air Force Institute of Technology offers noncommissioned officers a chance to earn an advanced science, engineering or management degree.

These onsite AFIT programs are available at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

For more information, visit <https://afvec.langley.af.mil/afvec/> or e-mail robert.hale@pentagon.af.mil.

Tuition aid online

Air Force members can request tuition assistance online.

Members can accomplish this request from their workstation through the Air Force Virtual Education Center.

AFVEC may be accessed through the Web site, <https://www.my.af.mil/afvecprod>, or through the Air Force Portal using the portal's reduced sign-on technology. New My AFVEC users are required to create an account.

Upon registration, select the "Request TA" option. A PowerPoint tutorial in this section to provides instructions on processing online applications.

It's important to know and enter basic course registration information in the request.

Bypass testing

Up to 30 hours of college bypass testing credit can be used to complete a 64-hour Community College of the Air Force degree.

CCAF credits may also be used toward bachelor's degrees.

For more information, call 377-0090.

GI Bill benefits

Montgomery GI Bill benefits may be used in conjunction with tuition assistance.

Tuition assistance covers 100 percent of tuition and fees. People may use their MGIB to cover costs over that.

For more information, call the education office, 377-7059.

LOAC training

Military personnel are required to satisfactorily complete Law of Armed Conflict training every 15 months.

Online training is at <http://development/81trss/ancillary/training.htm>, and click on the flash or text versions of the training. The system asks for your first and last names, rank, organization and office symbol.

After reviewing the material, take a 10-question quiz. A score of 70 is required. After training, print a dated certificate. Keep a copy and give one to your unit deployment manager, who notifies the legal office.

USM degree

The University of Southern Mississippi-Keesler offers a degree in technical occupational education.

For more information, call 377-2309.

NEWS AND FEATURES

Tops in Blue

NCO picked as sound technician

By Staff Sgt. Carlos Diaz

Keesler Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Brian Granger, noncommissioned officer in charge of the 81st Communications Squadron's Web team, has been chosen for the Air Force's Tops In Blue team.

"I was very excited and nervous at the same time," said Sergeant Granger, who was selected as an audio technician.

Entertainment showcase

Tops In Blue, the Air Force's entertainment showcase for the entire family, brings 90 minutes of music, dance and comedy performed by active-duty men and women.

During each annual tour, Tops In Blue entertains more than 250,000 military personnel and their families, presenting an average of 120 performances at 100 locations worldwide. The showcase is presented throughout the continental United States, Canada, Europe, Central America, Alaska and the Pacific.

"To be a part of something so important comes with a lot of challenges and responsibilities," he said.

'Sound guy' duties

Sergeant Granger is responsible for preparing things for the road, fixing cables, building audio amp racks, testing speakers, ordering parts and designing the system to take on the road.

He's also a band mixer on the road, responsible for equal sound levels and the overall sound of the band.

"As the sound guy, I'm completely responsible for the overall sound of the performance. If you can't hear the band, it's the sound guy's fault," he added.

During the Air Force Worldwide Talent Contest at Lackland Air Force Base,



"We may perform PT at 2 a.m. after getting to bed at 10 p.m. after working since 5 a.m. It's just crazy schedules like that that prepare you for the road."

— Sergeant Granger

Texas, Nov. 11-13, Sergeant Granger said he was nervous.

"There was so much talent there," he said. "However, all of our team leaders portrayed professionalism in everything."

"They made sure that we understood that we were there to be leaders and role models for the rest of the Air Force," the 30-year-old sergeant said.

Sergeant Granger, a native of Opelousas, La., grew up listening to music.

"My grandfather played

the piano, guitar, accordion, fiddle and sang, so I was always interested in music," he said.

His interest in music has grown throughout the years.

Long-range benefits

"I've always wanted to get into recording and possibly set up a home studio, so the experience I gain will benefit me tremendously," the eight-year Air Force veteran said.

Sergeant Granger's Tops in Blue experience begins Feb. 1. He'll be away from his wife, Staff Sgt. Lori Granger, a 336th Training Squadron instructor, and their daughter, 21-month-old Katherine.

He's expected to work 18-hour days and adapt quickly to ever-changing schedules.

"We may perform PT (physical training) at 2 a.m. after getting to bed at 10 p.m. after working since 5 a.m.," he explained. "It's just crazy schedules like that that prepare you for the road."

Sergeant Granger said he's ready for the challenges and looking forward to this opportunity.

Professional demeanor

"To be a member, you must always portray professional military etiquette," he said.

"The 81st CS and Team Keesler have really taken care of me while I've been stationed here. I plan on returning the favor by making everyone proud of me."

"Many great people have come before me and set the bar, and to step into their shoes is a huge task," said Sergeant Granger, who's been at Keesler for 2 1/2 years. "Becoming a member will help set me up for the rest of my career. This will provide me with a better work ethic, and after this experience, working 12-hour shifts will be a joke."

IN THE NEWS

Keesler gains 5 chiefs

Five Keesler senior noncommissioned officers were selected to become chief master sergeants in a special promotion cycle due to Hurricane Katrina.

The senior master sergeants selected are:

2nd Air Force — Clifford Massey.

336th Training Squadron — James Schmitt.

81st Surgical Operations Squadron — Pierre Culver.

81st Training Wing — Thomas Clarke.

85th Engineering Installation Squadron — Max Hammond Jr.

Flying Jennies get new plane

The 403rd Wing took possession of a new C-130J-30 from manufacturer Lockheed Martin Monday.

Lt. Gen. John Bradley, chief of Air Force Reserve at Air Force headquarters in Washington and Air Force Reserve Command commander at Robins Air Force Base, Ga., piloted the longer version of the C-130J to Keesler and handed it over to Brig. Gen. Rich Moss, 403rd Wing commander.

The aircraft is being flown by the 815th Airlift Squadron Flying Jennies. The unit has been instrumental in the process of qualifying the J-model for combat and participating in testing and evaluation of this new weapons system since 1998.

In addition, the unit also recently deployed an aircraft and crews to Southwest Asia in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. The Flying Jennies' participation in the Air Force's first combat deployment of the new C-130J-30 proved it can travel faster, farther and higher than older Hercules while carrying more troops and equipment.

Welcome home cookout

Active-duty members who've returned from a deployment since February and their families are honored at a cookout, noon Friday at the Vandenberg Community Center.

The event has special significance in Hurricane Katrina's wake, said Maj. Teresa Roberts, family support center director.

"Many of these folks have been served a double whammy — coming home to mass destruction and personal loss," she pointed out. "This is a great way to let them know that we appreciate their sacrifices."

"Everyone is invited," the major added. "We're asking those who were deployed to wear their desert uniforms."

For more information, call 377-2179.

Arborist conducts tree inventory

An arborist with Southern Urban Forestry Associates is doing an inventory of trees on base, including housing, for about 11 weeks.

"Housing residents shouldn't be alarmed to see him looking at trees in their area," said George Daniel, 81st Civil Engineer Squadron.

Last Keesler News of 2005

By contract, the Keesler News doesn't publish the weeks in which the Christmas and New Year's holidays fall.

The last Keesler News of 2005 is published Dec. 22.

The first issue of 2006 is published Jan. 12.

The newspaper office is minimally staffed on work days between Dec. 26-30 and Jan. 2-6.

World War II veteran receives Purple Heart

By Staff Sgt. Lee Smith

Keesler News staff

Better late — 62 years — than never. A World War II veteran was presented a Purple Heart for injuries sustained in 1943 in a ceremony Nov. 30 in the 81st Training Wing conference room.

George Roberts of Gulfport served as a radio operator on a B-17 bomber during the war.

On Dec. 20, 1943, the then-Army Air Corps technical sergeant incurred injuries from frostbite due to a direct wind blast during a combat mission 28,000 feet above Bremen, Germany.

His B-17 was hit by enemy flak. Damage to the aircraft caused the bomb bay doors to become stuck in the open position. He was struck by a 250-mph wind blast as he attempted to crank the bomb bay doors closed manually.

Mr. Roberts was grounded for six days.

Recently, Mr. Roberts' case was reviewed and the request for the medal was granted by Mississippi Congressman Gene Taylor.

He was encouraged to pursue the award by a representative of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Biloxi, according to his wife, Norma.

"My husband was talking about it to this person at the hospital, and the more they talked, the more the person encouraged George to see if he could get it," she said, standing in for her husband in a telephone interview because of his poor hearing.

"He said it was his fault that he didn't receive this award. He wasn't sure if he was entitled to it."

Mrs. Roberts said the award was approved four months ago, and the certificate was signed in September by then-Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John Jumper.

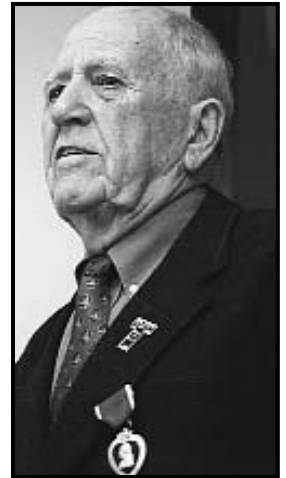
Mr. Roberts was presented the medal by Brig. Gen. Paul Capasso, 81st Training Wing commander.

"Even though it's 62 years later, time does not erase the incredible debt of gratitude we owe you for what you have done for your country," General Capasso said. "Our entire nation is eternally grateful to you, sir, for what you gave providing protection to its people."

Mrs. Roberts said the presentation was very special.

"I shed some tears, but he did a good job not showing as much emotion as I did," she said. "We both were very appreciative of the ceremony."

Mr. Roberts left the service in July 1944. He later worked for the Air Force as a civilian, first at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., then at Keesler, where he was a ground radio operations instructor. He retired from Keesler in 1976.



Mr. Roberts

Capasso,

from Page 1

been disrupted, as well as our permanent party military members who are still living in dorms, while their families are still living in safe havens," the general explained.

He sees the base's and community's shortage of lodging as the biggest obstacle to total recovery.

"But the good news is that every day you see progress in the making," General Capasso pointed out.

The Capasso family is experiencing that housing shortage firsthand. The general's wife, Laura, and their 6-year-old daughter, Claire, remain at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., with their dog while he works out interim living arrangements.

"I'm staying at Tyer House right now," he said. "It's probably going to be another three to four months before hurricane repairs to our base quarters are completed. I won't feel settled until I have my family with me."

"When you've lost 60 percent of the homes on base and 65,000 homes off base, it becomes a challenge to bring families back," the general acknowledged. "We're working with the support group to do some out-of-the-box think-

ing on how we can solve this issue. Additionally, we are working to ensure the entitlements currently available to our displaced families continue as we work thru the lodging issues."

General Capasso is convinced of the value of Keesler's training mission to the Air Force.

"Our mission is very important because the wing basically lays the foundation for the Air Force's core warfighting capabilities," he stressed. "It's all about supporting the warfighters — our Airmen are involved in operations at the tip of the spear. They are the ones who are working hard every day to ensure our freedom, as well as the freedom of others, can be enjoyed. We owe them the best training possible and Keesler sets the standard."

The new commander is encouraged by Keesler's quick return to training.

"When you look at what Keesler people have done since the hurricane, it's simply amazing," General Capasso pointed out. "No one thought in a million years that we'd be back in the classrooms already, nearly six months earlier than anticipated. Three weeks after the hurricane, training began — what a great tribute to the Gulf Coast community. It was and continues to be a team effort."

"In the next three to four months, we're looking at bringing on another 400 to 500 students, but once again, lodging is a problem," he continued. "As the community comes back, hotel rooms, apartment complexes and homes will become available again, ensuring the support infrastructure is in place to get to pre-Katrina training capabilities."

Community outreach is another important focus for Keesler's new leader.

"Keesler can't survive without strong community support," General Capasso insisted. "They support us in every endeavor and supply the people that work here. They're family — we can't get the job done without community partnerships."

"One of the things I really like about Keesler is that this community shows this base a lot of hospitality, whether you're an Airman or a general officer," he noted. "They embrace you as part of their family."

General Capasso was touched that Biloxi Mayor A.J. Holloway and many other community representatives attended his change-of-command ceremony.

"The whole Gulf Coast was devastated by the hurricane, and yet these leaders took the time to show their support," he commented. "They have a

lot of other things they could've focused on, but they still showed up. We have a great partnership with the downtown community. Together we can do great things."

Although it's his third tour at Keesler, much has changed since General Capasso's last assignment here 20 years ago. However, in the past five years, he's been able to keep tabs on Keesler's growth during frequent visits to speak to students in communications and information officer courses.

"Some things haven't changed — the second time I was stationed here, I lived on Vandenberg Drive, and the house is still standing, but it got a little wet during the hurricane," he remarked. "More than anything, the surrounding communities have changed — back then there were no casinos, not much but the beaches."

The general said his predecessors in the past two decades focused on what commanders are supposed to do — making sure the needs of Keesler people were met.

"You can see big changes in how the base looks," he observed. "Keesler has expanded and has many new structures. The biggest thing I've noticed is the infrastructure has grown tremendously. Look at our world-class fitness centers compared to

other bases. I think the Pecan Dining Facility was built in 1941, and it's not an old, dilapidated building — it's fantastic."

General Capasso hopes his common-sense approach to command is successful at Keesler.

"I try to go back to the basics and weed through the wheat and the chaff," he explained. "I like to keep things simple. As we move forward, we will aim high and set big goals, but common sense has to prevail. We owe this to our taxpayers. We have to scrutinize our plans carefully."

"The other thing I bring to the table is enthusiasm ... getting out there, getting to know our people, our community, and working with them," General Capasso said. "Together we can move mountains."

"We need to be charging the hill and rebuilding Keesler to the center of excellence it was and still is today," he declared. "We have a lot of opportunities right now to make Keesler bigger, better and stronger. We need to be looking outside of the box — even though Katrina was a devastating event, some unique opportunities have come along and we need to be able to take advantage of them."

PERSONNEL NOTES

Editor's note: This column is a service of the Keesler News. Contributors include the Air Force Personnel Center, Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, and the 81st Mission Support Squadron's military and civilian personnel flights.

Expansion of SGLI benefits

Air Force Print News

SAN ANTONIO — Service members were enrolled in a new program Dec. 1 that expands benefits provided through Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance.

The traumatic SGLI benefit provides payouts of up to \$100,000 for service members with traumatic injuries.

Benefits are retroactive from Oct. 7, 2001, for service members who've lost limbs, eyesight or speech or received other traumatic injuries as a direct result of Operations Iraqi Freedom or Enduring Freedom, Veterans Affairs officials said.

The benefit doesn't apply to service members suffering from disease.

Those enrolled in the SGLI program notice an increase in their premiums when this program goes into effect. The traumatic SGLI benefit is rolled into the basic SGLI program and costs \$1 a month, said Stephen Wurtz, the VA's deputy assistant director for insurance.

TSGLI can't be declined unless the service member also declines basic SGLI coverage, VA officials said.

For more information, visit the Air Force Personnel Center Force shaping Web site, <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/retsep/shape.htm> or call the AFPC contact center, 1-800-616-3775.

Force shaping

For information on force shaping, visit the Air Force Personnel Center Force shaping Web site, <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/retsep/shape.htm>, or call the AFPC contact center, 1-800-616-3775.

Verifying deployment credit

For information on verifying deployment credit, call the Air Force Personnel Center's field activities office, DSN 665-2671 or commercial 1-210-565-2671.

Temporary duty and test cycles

If members' temporary duty period begins before the testing cycle starts and extends beyond the end of the testing cycle, they should test at the TDY location if facilities are available and requirements permit.

Testing up to 10 days prior to the announced cycle is authorized for members TDY during the entire testing cycle who can't test at their TDY location.

Members who decline to test early when so directed are ineligible for promotion for the remainder of the test cycle.

For more information, see Air Force Instruction 36-2605, Air Force Military Personnel Testing System.

Airline ticket credit process

If an airline ticket was purchased with a government travel card, apply for the airline credit by contacting your travel agent or the airline.

If credit isn't received within 30-45 days, call the Government Card Service Unit to file a dispute. The phone number is on the back of the card.

The bank requires a copy of the credit voucher for the unused ticket or refund. The credit voucher must include the name of the airline, date the ticket was purchased and ticket number.

For more information, go to https://www.mil.keesler.af.mil/81cpts/FMF/GTCC/GTCC_main.htm or <http://www.saffm.hq.mil/affsc/>.

Base facilities update

Keesler Club acts as warehouse for NAF items

By Senior Airman
Sarah Stegman

Keesler News staff

Pre-Katrina, the Keesler Club served as a lounge for Airmen to unwind after work, get a bite to eat during the duty day and a gathering place for special occasions.

Now, the gutted building acts as a chandelier-lit warehouse for excess lodging items.

"As of now, it's undecided what's to become of the building," said Don Cook, 81st Services Division.

Open base facilities are:

81st Services Division

Arts and crafts, frame and engraving shops — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Auto skills center — 1-7 p.m. Tuesday-Friday; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and non-working Fridays. The car wash is open 24 hours a day.

Child development center — 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Space is available at the center and for the preschool program. For more information, call 377-2211.

Dining facilities — Until further notice, lunch meals in all dining facilities are provided only to military personnel with meal cards, those at Keesler on temporary duty orders and those normally authorized to eat in these facilities.

Civilians, other than those displaced as a result of Hurricane Katrina, aren't authorized to use the dining facilities during the lunch meal.

Azalea Dining Facility serves only non-prior service students for all meals.

Family child care — five providers are accepting children in their homes. Children are also being accepted at the mildly-ill family child care home.

For more information, call 377-3189.

People interested in becoming licensed family child care providers, call the family child care office, 377-5935, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday.



Photo by Kemberly Groue

The Keesler Club's ballroom is now a storage facility for excess lodging items.

Inns of Keesler — open 24 hours.

Half Time Café — 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Friday-Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday.

Information, ticket and travel office — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesdays-working Fridays in the customer service area of Vandenberg Community Center.

McBride Library — closed until Dec. 15 for post-Katrina maintenance.

These services are available: Federal Emergency Management Agency fax service 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. daily. Books may be renewed by phone Monday through Friday. Books may be returned to the outside book drop at any time.

Library access is at the south entrance.

Vandenberg Community Center — open for senior airmen and below 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sunday-Thursday; 10 a.m. to midnight Friday-Saturday.

Wood shop — 1 to 7 p.m. Tuesday-Friday, and 10 a.m.

to 5 p.m. Saturday and non-working Fridays. Planers and drum sanders aren't available at this time.

Youth activities center — 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. workdays and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays. Before- and after-school program is 6-8:30 a.m. and 3:30-6 p.m. for children in kindergarten through grade 6.

Triangle Fitness Center, the marina, Keesler Club, Warrior Lounge and Keesler Community Center are closed.

AAFES

Car care center — 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Service bays close at 3:30 p.m.

For more information, call 432-2404.

Class Six/Shoppette — open 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday-Saturday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sundays as a one-stop holiday shop, with toys, clothing, decorations and gift items.

The main exchange, dorm shoppette and medical center exchange are closed indefinitely.

Home furnishings store

— 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily at 220 Ploesti Drive with an entrance on Hercules Street.

Welch Auditorium — movies shown 7 p.m. Friday; 2 and 7 p.m. Saturday.

Banking

BancorpSouth — bank lobby is now open during normal business hours, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday.

The drive-up automatic teller machine is operational 24 hours a day, and the mini-mall ATM is also operating during business hours.

Keesler Federal Credit Union — open during regular banking hours, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday, in the trailer located in the credit union's parking lot. ATMs on base are now operational 24 hours a day.

Gates

Oak Park Gate is open 5:30-7:30 a.m. and 3:30-5:30 p.m. Monday-Friday to help alleviate traffic due to the closure of Highway 90. Pass

Road, White Avenue and Meadows Drive gates are open around the clock. Judge Sekul Gate is closed.

Housing

The housing office in Chapel One is reassigning homes to families whose base housing is uninhabitable. For a list of available off-base housing, call Mary Krystosek, 377-9741.

The office is the focal point for military housing residents to request portable storage units or labor assistance.

Mini-mall

Alteration shop — noon to 7 p.m. Monday-Friday and noon to 4 p.m. Saturday.

At Ease embroidery/unit apparel — noon to 7 p.m. daily.

Barber shop — 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Beauty shop — 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Saturday.

CZee Zone Internet Café — 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily.

Dawg Daze hot dog cart — 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily.

Laundry and dry cleaners — noon to 7 p.m. Monday-Friday, noon to 4 p.m. Saturday.

Military clothing sales — 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and noon to 4 p.m. Sunday.

Seattle's Best Coffee — 7 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. daily in the mini-mall.

Subway — 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily.

Moves

Area Defense Counsel — Keesler's office is now in Room 5703, Locker House. The office, an independent office of the Air Force Legal Services Agency, provides representation for investigations, administrative actions and discharges, nonjudicial punishment, courts-martial and other adverse actions. For appointments, call 377-2429.

Contracting — now located in Room 101, old Cody Hall.

Education office — now located in Room 212, old Cody Hall. For assistance,

Please see **Facilities**, Page 15

Facilities,

from Page 14

call 377-2323 or 2171.

Family support center — now located on the first floor, old Cody Hall. A student office remains open in the Fishbowl.

In Chapel One, there's an annex with supplies for all ranks and base civilians including clothes, food, baby items and cleaning supplies. Hours are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. working Fridays.

Finance — now located on the second floor, Vosler Center. Hours are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. working Fridays. For military and travel pay questions, call 377-7272 or 4212.

Legal office — aid is available 9 a.m. to noon and 1-5 p.m. workdays in Room 246, Levitow Training Support Facility. A claims briefing is 10 a.m. daily, with filing from 8 a.m. to noon. For appointments, call 377-3510. For Katrina claims, call 377-3630. The fax number is 377-3630.

Personal finances — The personal financial management program is now located in Room 119, old Cody Hall. For more information, call 377-8601 or 2179.

Personnel offices — now located in Room 218, old Cody Hall. The civilian per-

sonnel office has relocated to the Airman Leadership School building.

Retirees, annuitants — the retiree activities center has moved from Thrower Park to Room 104, old Cody Hall.

Traffic management office — TMO for technical training students in Room 211, Levitow Training Support Facility, is open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. For more information, call 377- 0174, 1263, 7448 or 3147.

The main TMO has returned to Sablich Center, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Phone numbers are inbound personal property, 377-7813; outbound counselors, 377-7815; outbound documentation, 377-2326; non-temporary storage, 377-7810; quality assurance, 377-2969; passenger travel, 377-2600; N&N Travel, 432-5825; TMO officer and administrative staff, 377-7825.

Pets

Veterinary clinic — open 8 a.m. to noon Mondays-Fridays for over-the-counter sales. For appointments to have pets vaccinated or for sick pets, call 377-6883.

Self-help store

The self-help store is open 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Thursday for facility managers, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. for housing residents and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fridays. For more information, call 377-5397.

Medical appointment line reopens

81st Medical Group

Keesler Medical Center's appointment line became operational again Dec. 1.

Tricare Prime beneficiaries may use the 1-800-700-8603 line to book appointments, leave telephone consults for their primary care managers or request authorizations for non-emergency services.

The medical center doesn't have the capability to accept "space-available" Tricare Standard or Extra beneficiaries for care at this time.

The appointment line is open for all beneficiaries 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday-Friday; 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday; and 8 a.m. to noon Sunday. Active-duty personnel may begin calling at 5 a.m. Monday-Friday.

Signs directing patients to the clinics are posted along the route from the "A Tower" entrance to the clinic areas. Members of the security staff are also available to provide directions.

Clinic hours are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. working Fridays and 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. compressed work schedule Fridays.

Radiology returned to its former location on the first floor. Provided are routine radiographs, computerized tomography and ultrasounds for Tricare Prime patients seen at the medical center only.

The immunization clinic is on the first floor in the former urology clinic. Inoculations, including flu shots, are available to active-duty members, retirees and dependents. No allergy shots are available at this time.

The immunization clinic staff is also going to individual squadrons to vaccinate active-duty members.

The temporary pharmacy has relocated from the clinical research laboratory to the medical photo/oral surgery area on the first floor of the medical center. Hours are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For remaining refills from on-base prescriptions, call 377-6360. Refills may be picked up about four days later at the temporary pharmacy distribution area in Building 5 of the Biloxi Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Veterans Boulevard, just off Pass Road.

Patients renewing prescriptions must be seen by their primary care managers or another Tricare network provider.

Prescriptions written off-base by off-base providers must be filled and refilled at off-base pharmacies with a possible co-pay or cost-share.

The first aid station, 377-0500, is now open 7 a.m.-7 p.m. seven days a week, beginning today. Ambulance coverage for Keesler is still available 24 hours a day, seven days a week through the 911 line. Patients are taken directly to off-base medical facilities.

The clinical laboratory has also returned to its former location in the medical center. The laboratory provides routine chemistries, blood work, Pap smears and cultures.

Life skills, mental health, family advocacy, including the exceptional family member pro-

gram, and alcohol and drug abuse prevention and treatment services remain in the dental clinic, but have moved to suites H and J. Patients may use the entrance at the west end of the building for access. Phone numbers are 377-7006 and 6216.

Family practice is now located in the former medical specialties clinic. For appointments, call 377-8819 before 5 p.m. The clinic opens at 5:30 a.m. for active duty and 7 a.m. for retirees and dependents. The staff sees acute uncomplicated illnesses, handles personal health assessments and provides medication refills. Urgicare and walk-in services aren't available.

Internal medicine, 377-4630 and 4590, returned to its former location.

Pediatrics, 377-8185, has moved to the former oncology/hematology clinic area. The staff provides walk-in acute medical care, well-baby visits, Q-code exams and exceptional family member program/special needs identification. Allergy services aren't available yet.

Women's health, 377-6920, relocated to the former general surgery clinic, next to the new flight medicine clinic. Provided is routine health care to active duty, dependents and Tricare Prime enrollees, and retirees on a space-available basis. Services are general gynecological problems, annual pap smear exams, birth control and follow-up of abnormal paps. No obstetrical services are available. The clinic can initiate profiles for pregnant active-duty patients.

Flight medicine, 377-6668, is in the surgical specialties clinic. It furnishes walk-in acute medical care, duties-not-involved-in-flying paperwork, profiles and PHAs.

General surgery and orthopedics share the former orthopedic clinic. Surgical services, 377-6495, are available only for consultations.

Medical records are available in the Wylie Auditorium at the medical center.

Endocrine and dermatology services are available to walk-ins in the family practice clinic.

The Triangle clinic, 377-1008, is in the Levitow Training Support Facility. Only non-prior service students are seen for acute and urgent care.

Dental services, 377-4510, include routine care and cleanings for active-duty members only. Dental emergency care is available for active-duty members, dependents and retirees.

Prescriptions written off-base by off-base providers must be filled and refilled at off-base pharmacies with a possible co-pay or cost-share.

Karon Forney, director of customer relations, is back in the medical center on the first floor. She doesn't have a phone, but can be reached by e-mail at karon.forney@keesler.af.mil or by stopping by her office.

Life support classes are in the bioenvironmental engineering building. Patients requiring advanced cardiac and advanced pediatric life support are sent off-base for recertification.

Air Force adds post-deployment health assessment

By Staff Sgt. C. Todd Lopez

Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — Airmen returning from deployment now have two opportunities to let health care workers know of their mental and physical health status.

Beginning this month, the Air Force requires all Airmen returning from deployments to complete a second post-deployment health reassessment. The second PDHRA needs to be completed between 90 and 180 days after returning home from a deployment. It complements the initial post-deployment health assessment, which Airmen complete at the end of their deployments.

The PDHRA is another layer of assessment meant to capture information about mental and physical health issues that may not have materialized immediately upon a return home, said

Lt. Col. Jim Favret, the clinical consultant to the Air Force Surgeon General for the biomedical science corps.

"The PDHRA enhances the existing procedures we have to monitor the health of our Airmen," he said. "It is an additional tool we are about to put in place to check the health of our Airmen after deployment."

On paper, the PDHRA is a four-page Department of Defense form called DD2900. That document is already available online. But Airmen won't fill out the paper form. Instead, some 90 days after returning from overseas, their unit deployment manager sends them a link to a Web-based version of the form.

The results of an Airman's PDHRA are sent to his medical treatment facility for review. At the Airman's request, or as the result of a determination

made by someone reviewing their assessment, an Airman may be called in to discuss potential health concerns with a medical professional.

"If folks indicate they are experiencing some symptoms, then they will have an opportunity to meet with a health care provider who will do a more in-depth assessment," Colonel Favret said. "Then we will provide them with follow-up care if it is needed."

The PDHRA gathers information from Airmen about their current health status with questions similar to what might be filled out when visiting a doctor's office. For instance, the assessment provides a list of symptoms Airmen can select. There are also questions about injuries or wounds sustained during deployment and potential exposure to environmental hazards.

The assessment also asks questions

about an Airman's interaction with family, use of alcohol, and experiences while on deployment.

"This PDHRA has a lot more focus on mental health issues," Colonel Favret said. "The Air Force wants to send the message to folks that it is perfectly normal that at different points in our lives we have mental health concerns, especially after a stressful deployment, and that it is okay to acknowledge that and to seek help."

While the PDHRA isn't a substitute for a consultation with a medical professional, it's another opportunity for Airmen to let the Air Force know about their health status. And it's another opportunity to catch something serious before it can escalate.

The paper version of the PDHRA can be found at: <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/forminfo/forminfo3292.html>.

Identification cards

Replacement in works for federal employees

By Army Sgt. Sara Wood

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — A new, standardized identification card is being developed for all federal employees.

The new card replaces the common access cards that military personnel, government civilians and contractors now hold, said Mary Dixon, deputy director of the Defense Manpower Data Center.

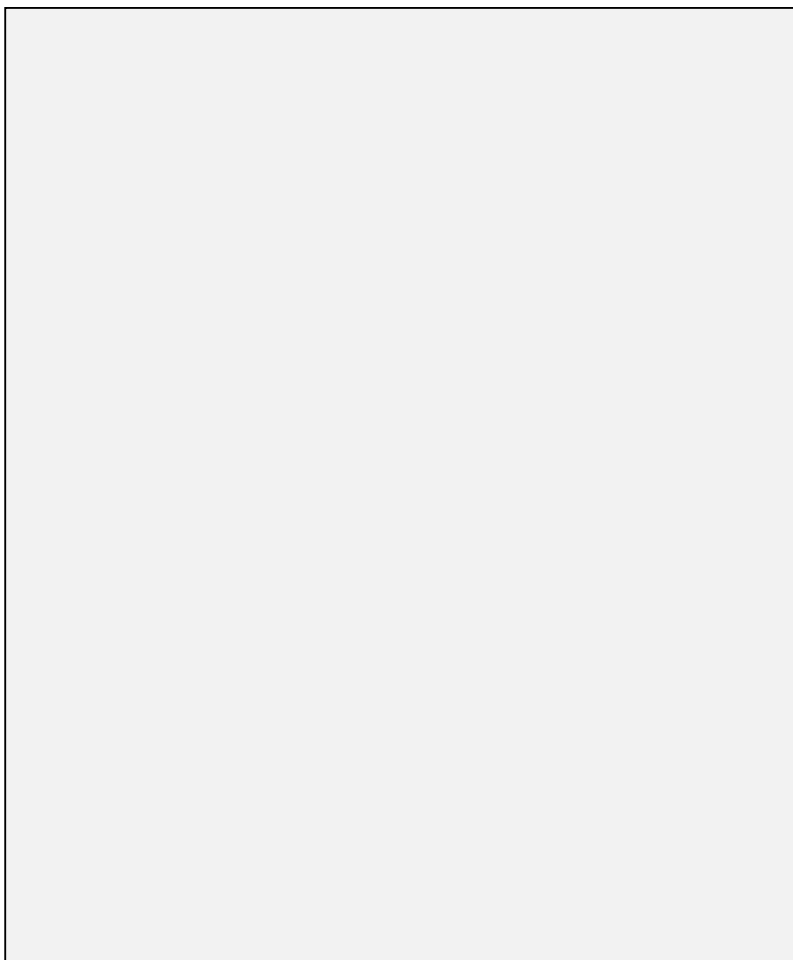
The new cards look much the same as CACs, with a few changes, Mrs. Dixon said. The color scheme is different and more information is embedded in the card, she said.

The added information is a biometric of two fingerprints, to be used for identification purposes, and a string of numbers that allows physical access to buildings, Mrs. Dixon said.

The biggest change is the addition of wireless technology, which allows the cards to be read by a machine from a short distance away, Mrs. Dixon said. This makes the new cards much easier to use for access to buildings than

CACs, which must be swiped through a reader, she said.

The new cards themselves won't be enough to grant access to all federal buildings, Mrs. Dixon said. Rather, they're checked against each building's database to see if an individual has access.



HOLIDAY NOTES

Christmas in the Park — today at the marina park. Events include rides for the children and handcrafted items for sale at 4 p.m., Christmas caroling at 4:45 p.m., Christmas tree lighting at 5 p.m., fire truck with Santa at 5:30 p.m. and a visit with Santa at 5:45 p.m.

Free hot dogs, chili, cider, hot chocolate and cookies will be served.

Crafters who would like a free display booth, call 377-2821.

Gift camp — 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at the arts and crafts center. For ages 8 and older. Cost is \$20; includes lunch and three fun craft projects perfect for Christmas gifts.

For more information, call 377-2821.

Youth activities center free Christmas party — 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Saturday for ages 6-12.

Operation Santa Police — 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday.

Members of 81st Security Forces Squadron "arrest" Keesler individuals with a "warrant" and bring them to Building 3501, the 81st SFS holding cell, until their time is up.

Cost is \$10 for the first 30 minutes and \$5 for additional minutes for up to two hours.

The "arrested" individuals sit in the cell until they are "bailed" out. Bail can be posted by matching the cost of the warrant.

Proceeds benefit the Toys for Tots and the 81st Security Forces Squadron Council.

For more information, call 377-3567 or 377-4720 or stop by Building 3501, Room 113.

Free jingle bell holiday 5-kilometer run — 2:30 p.m. Dec. 15 at Blake Fitness Center. Wear a fun costume and jingle your bells. Prizes awarded to top five men and women and for overall best costume. Refreshments provided.

For more information, call 377-4385.

Youth activities center Christmas bazaar — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dec. 17, hosted by the school-age youth program. Craft items also on sale. Refreshments served.

Holiday camp — 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Dec. 19-23 for children in kindergarten through grade 6. Registration deadline is Dec. 15.

For more information, call 377-4116.

Santa calling — Parents who'd like to have their children receive a personal call from Santa between Dec. 20-23, contact the youth activities center by Dec. 16.

New Year's Eve bowling party — 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. Dec. 31 at Gaude Lanes. Event isn't just for bowlers. Glow-in-the-dark bowling, music, dancing, prizes, free use of the game machines, refreshments, party favors, non-alcoholic champagne toast and a late-night breakfast. Alcoholic beverages sold separately. Price for bowlers is \$30 for adults and \$20 for ages 5-17 including bowling shoes. Non-bowlers pay \$20 for adults and \$10 for children. Children ages 11 and younger must be accompanied by an adult.

KEESLER NEWS
Keesler Air Force Base
Biloxi, Mississippi

Vol. 43, No. 39
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Develop America's Airmen today... for tomorrow

Base improves safety record in fiscal 2005

By Susan Griggs

The 81st Training Wing's annual mishap summary and analysis for fiscal 2005 shows marked improvement, especially during the critical summer months.

Operation Summer Surgeon, Summer Challenge, Air Education and Training Command's version of the Air Force's 101st Annual Days of Summer "was a huge success for Keesler," said Lt. Col. Lawrence Kneib, the 81st TRW safety chief.

That period from Memorial Day to Labor Day usually has more accidents due to summer travel and recreational activities.

During this period, the wing had no Class A or B mishaps, and one four Class C mishaps were a 43 percent decrease, compared to FY04, the colonel said. "This could be attributed to the culture change of operational risk management by all personnel throughout the wing and to increased emphasis from leadership."

Class A mishaps include a fatality, a permanent total disability, destruction of a Defense Department aircraft or an accident with a total cost of \$1 million or more.

Class B mishaps include a permanent partial disability.

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Their first look at Keesler



Some of the 312 basic training graduates who arrived at Keesler Monday for technical training walk from their buses to dormitories in the Triangle. This was the largest one-day influx of students in at least two years, according to 81st Training Group officials.

Photos by Frank York

Congress reviews new civilian personnel system

By Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Ending a nearly two-year process, the Defense Department and Congress the final national security personnel system regulation.

Acting Deputy Defense Secretary Gordon England said Oct. 26 that members of Congress have 30 days to review the final regulation.

"The regulations take effect Nov. 23. Changes to the regulation will automatically affect 65,000 of the 750,000 DOD civilian employees."

Once adopted, the regulations portion of the system takes effect immediately.

"The human resources personnel — the new pay bands, the pay-for-performance system, etc. — is scheduled to progressively begin in February," Mr. England said.

Some 40,000 employees are in the first group to come under the new program, officials said. But human resources officials are being very deliberate in how the program goes, Mr. England said.

In fact, the system goes through a six-month "pilot period," before becoming effective.

"That is, at the end of six months, we'll evaluate," Mr. England said. "We'll start as if this was for real, but it will be a mock exercise in terms of the results we can learn."

Please see Personnel, Page 9

For Keesler News delivery or newspaper display racks, base facilities managers call 377-3163.

KEESLER NOTES

Smooth Moves

The family support center's Smooth Moves program for families planning a permanent change of station is 9 a.m. to noon today in Room 122, old Cody Hall.

For more information, call Jennifer Johnson, 377-5990.

Unit function

The military personnel flight closes at noon Dec. 15 for a unit function.

For more information, call customer service, 377-1091.

Finance closing

The 81st Comptroller Squadron's finance office in the Vosler Center closes at 2:30 p.m. Dec. 15 for an official function.

For emergencies, call 365-8922.

Detectors required

Base housing residents are required to sign up for carbon monoxide detectors at the self-help store unless they already have permanently-installed detectors.

One detector is required for single-story units and two for two-story units. Mounting instructions are available.

For more information, call base housing, 377-9741.

Preschool program

The part-day preschool program has openings for 3-5-year-olds in the 8:30-11:30 a.m. and 12:30-3:30 p.m. sessions.

Classes are Mondays-working Fridays at the youth activities center.

Enrollment is at the child development center.

For more information, call 377-2211.

Fitting gas masks

Gas masks are fit tested 8-10:30 a.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays in Building 420, east of Fisher House on Fisher Street.

KOSC activities

For information on Keesler Officers Spouses Club activities, call Michelle Harper, 327-6848.

SPORTS AND RECREATION

Outdoor recreation operates in different facility

Hurricane forced shop to relocate, but mission remains same

By Staff Sgt. Lee Smith

Keesler News staff

Hurricane Katrina forced outdoor recreation out of its building, but didn't put it out of business.

The shop was relocated to Building 6734 in marina park in September. Its former site now houses the Katrina Kantina, an off-duty lounge for staff sergeants and above.

Only the location has changed, according to John Rettig, outdoor recreation manager.

"Our job is to provide wholesome and constructive leisure time activities that directly promote the physical and mental well-being of the active-duty military personnel and their dependents, using natural resources provided in the state of Mississippi," he said.

"We provide 95 percent of the services offered before the hurricane. The only things we don't have right now are wet storage, our public fishing piers and our dry storage compound."

Before Katrina, the outdoor recreation shop offered fishing and boat trips, and boat rentals. Those trips have been temporarily suspended, Rettig said.

"We now offer resale items, such as fishing poles, and rental items," Rettig said.

"We're planning on opening our aquatic program in May," he added. "We'll also have our recreational park operational, with four open air pavilions and a playground, our family campground with 52 full-service sites, equipment issue with any type of camping or leisure equipment desired, and nearly 300 recreational vehicle storage sites."

Rettig said some other services could be available in the next six months.

"We have contractors hard at work rebuilding our damaged areas," he explained.

Rettig put outdoor recreation's hurricane losses at "more than \$1 million," including pontoon boats and fishing skiffs.



Photo by Kemberly Groue

Jessica Ware, a non-appropriated funds employee with the 81st Mission Support Group, sets up bicycles for rent Dec. 1.

SCORES AND MORE

Bowling

League sign-ups — starts in December for all leagues. Mondays is Federal league, five bowlers per team; Hospital and Veterans Affairs Employee Association leagues, Tuesday; Wednesday is Mixed League, four bowlers per team; Thursdays is seniors, four bowlers per team and women's league continues Thursday.

Intramural league meeting — 1:30 p.m. Dec. 15. Squadrons interested in participating should send a representative.

For more information, call 377-2817.

11th Frame snack bar — inside Gauda Lanes, open 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Mondays-Fridays, for lunch only, 5-9:30 p.m. Monday-Friday and Saturday and 3-9:30 p.m. Sunday.

Gauda Lanes — open 5-10 p.m. Monday-Friday, 3-10 p.m. Saturday, and 1-7 p.m. Sunday.

Fitness centers

Blake Fitness Center — 4:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Mondays-through working Fridays; 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. non-

working Fridays; 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.

Dragon Fitness Center — open Monday-Friday 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.; closed non-working Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. The basketball court area isn't available.

Triangle Fitness Center — closed until further notice.

Golf

The front nine holes of the Bay Breeze Golf Course is now open for walkers only. It remains open daily for free play until further notice.

Outdoor recreation

Katrina Kantina — a lounge for staff sergeants and above, is in the main marina building. Opens at 3:30 p.m. Tuesday-Friday. For more information, call 377-3160.

Youth activities center

Holiday hoops basketball — registration accepted

today through Wednesday. Cost for members is \$25; nonmembers \$35. Ages 6-12.

Open recreation — Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., ages 6 and older.

Torch Club — 5 p.m. today and Dec. 15, ages 9-12.

Christmas party — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday. For more information, call 377-3349.

Christmas bazaar — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dec. 17. Craft items on sale. Refreshments served. The event hosted by the school-age youth program.

Holiday camp — 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Dec. 19-23 for children in kindergarden through grade 6. Registration deadline is Dec. 15.

Fam camp — available for mission-essential active-duty, civilian and contractors, and non-mission essential active-duty who've been displaced. For more information, call 594-0543.

Back on course

John Wilkins, 81st Communications Squadron, lines up a putt on the ninth hole of the Bay Breeze Golf Course Dec. 1. The course opened for the first time since late August with a Chiefs-Eagles tournament. Bay Breeze sustained damage from Hurricane Katrina, leaving the Gulfport Sea-bee Base's Pine Haven Golf Course as the only area course for military members. The Bay Breeze's front nine holes are now available for play, free of charge, until further notice.

Photo by Kemberly Groue



Military, civilian boxers to slug it out at Keesler Friday

By Staff Sgt. Lee Smith

Keesler News staff

Keesler hosts an amateur boxing event, 7-10 p.m., Friday in Hangar 4.

"Operation Slugfest" features 24 amateur boxers in three- and four-round bouts.

Eight boxers, both military and civilians, compete in each of three weight categories: light-weight (boxers weighing 155 pounds and below); middleweight (155-190 pounds) and heavyweight (190 pounds and over).

Tickets are \$10 for senior airmen and below, and \$15 for staff sergeant and above, and can be purchased at Vandenberg Community Center and Gaude Lanes.

Among the competitors for the event are eight Keesler boxers: Steve Pafion, Rui Gambino, John Pfeifer, Carlin Butler, Michael Keany, Timothy Todd, Lowie Camat and Jeffrey Reiss.

There are also Seabee, Marine and Army boxers competing.

A limited number of tickets are also available to the off-base public.

The event is sponsored by Bomber Promotions and sanctioned by the Mississippi State Athletic Commission.

Food and beverages will be available.

For more information, call 377-1597.

DIGEST

HONORS

Student honor roll

332nd Training Squadron

Electronic principles — Airmen Basic Matthew Bauman, Justin Bishop, Britt Brown, Dane Collins, Jerney Driscoll, Jonathan Gonzalez, Jose Gonzalez, Scott Gray, Brian Henderson, Colin Hoffert, David Jones, Daniel Johnsen, Johathan Kindblade, Morgan Littleton, Heather Mangerson, Matthew Metzger, Alexis Moreno, Brandon Myers, Timothy Ogburn, Laverne Pettit, Ace Ranada, Donald Robbins, Shaina Smith, Latoya Stewart, Khalfanik Thomas, James Vanderwall, Zachary Waldon and Daniel Wegman; Airmen Brian Bianco, Mark Campos, Christopher Delano, Daniel Gray, Matthew Hixon, David Johnson, Matthew McCurtain, Lawrence Ng, Shaollung Ping, Matthew Sanderson and Walter Wood; Airmen 1st Class Dennis Anderson, Wesley Cato, David Decker, Derrick Dugay, Christopher Escude, Clifford Ferrell, Christopher Flesner, Janelle Holloway, Richard Long, Kristopher Miller, Jose Navarro, Ian Ouimet, Eric Ratajczak, Andrew Sauer, Brian Schmedlin, Arthur Serfes, Matthew Vandiver, William Walker, Jerome Whiteside, Matthew Wickham, Kevin Wolff and Xiong Yang; Staff Sgts. Dante Adams, Joshua Kersker and Ismael Lopez.

Metrology training flight — Airman 1st Class Michael Mitchell.

334th TRS

Air traffic control operations training flight — Airmen Basic Jonathan Brooks, Adam Bruns, Lindsay Dulley, Cory Lindblom, Brandon Paddock and Monica Shilman; Airman Patrick Bolden; Airmen 1st Class Mathew Barbazon, Melba Boyd, Evan Osborne, Matthew Martin, Andrew Rupert and Melissa Wallis.

335th TRS

Comptroller training flight — Airman Basic Kaylyn Crane, Jawann Hazzard, Kasim Playfair, Christopher Quattlebaum and Douglas Wolf; Airman Cecilia Amuzu, Airman 1st Class Edward Addison, Angela Bolo, Bengson Campos, Robert Johnson, Benjamin McGuire, Maria Proano, Crissy Serviss, Julie Silfven and Ryan Yung; Senior Airman Stephen Otis; Staff Sgts. Bruce Comer, Wanda Deemer, Amy Logsdon, Kimberly Spencer and Denver Stack; Tech. Sgt. Matthew Law.

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Ruston Gonzales, Mark Hazzard, Nicholas Hoots and Dorothy Taylor; Navy Airman Recruit Elizabeth Brockman; Navy Airman Apprentice Melissa Springer; Navy Airman Benjamin Wells.

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Communications-computer systems training flight — Airman Basic Kevin Glavin; Airmen 1st Class Jeffrey Alt, Danielle Hawker, Johnathan Hughes and James West.

Information management apprentice course — Airmen Basic Jennifer Barr, Brian Hall, Jordan McCoy, Candace Pizura and Brittany Pope; Airmen 1st Class David Swanson.

338th TRS

Computer, network, cryptographic and switching systems course — Airman Basic Buddy Franklin; Airmen Mathew Huntsman, Keith Kuzniar, Kevin Mayo, Sharon Vargas, Daniel Watson and Joaquin Watson; Airmen 1st Class James Byrd, Thomas Forte, Diana Haggard, Ian McDevitt, Matthew Smith, David Thompson, Christopher Whitley and Matthew Willis; Staff Sgt. Gene Fish.

Ground radio — Airmen Basic Willie Ferguson, James Kasper and William Schottleutner, Airmen 1st Class Michael Allison, Daniel Arnold, Joshua Cardenas, Madison Collins, Jose Gonzalez, Vernon Griffith, Emrys Maier, Sarah Metzger, Sara Nass, Rome Reiswig, John Shuster and Zachariah Sigsworth; Staff Sgts. Jeffery Maurer and Michael Mazurik.

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Classes scheduled to resume in January.

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Current class runs through Dec. 16 at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala. No decision has been made about other classes at this time.

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Tobacco cessation — classes resume in January. To register, call 377-5305.

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Civilian job certification and licensing requirements for military personnel and veterans — <http://www.dol.gov/dol/vets>.

Please see **Digest**, Page 24

DINING HALL MENUS

Today

Lunch — herbed baked chicken, cornbread, stuffed cabbage rolls, fried catfish, blackeyed peas with rice, mashed potatoes, gravy, baked sweet potatoes, mixed vegetables, peas, fruit salad, potato salad, cream of broccoli soup, chicken and wild rice soup, chili, cannonball sandwich and Italian pepper beef sandwich.

Dinner — roast pork loin, cornbread, jaegerschnitzel veal, glazed cornish hen, potato halves, orange rice, gravy, carrots, pinto beans, corn combo, fruit salad, potato salad, cream of broccoli soup, chicken and wild rice soup, chili, cannonball sandwich and Italian pepper beef sandwich.

Friday

Lunch — Mexican baked chicken, Swiss steak, stuffed peppers, macaroni and cheese, rice, gravy, corn on the cob, beans, peas and carrots, pasta salad, three-bean salad, clam chowder, garden vegetable soup, frontier chicken chili, barbecue pork sandwiches and burritos.

Dinner — Mexican baked chicken, Swiss steak, stuffed peppers, macaroni and cheese, rice, gravy, corn on the cob, beans, peas and carrots, pasta salad, three-bean salad, clam chowder, garden vegetable soup, frontier chicken chili, barbecue pork sandwiches and burritos.

Saturday

Lunch — crispy baked chicken, cajun meatloaf, ribeye steak, baked and mashed potatoes, gravy, broccoli, French peas, glazed carrots, fruit medley, kidney bean salad, bean soup, chicken gumbo, chili and buffalo wings.

Dinner — fish almonidine, stir-fry chicken with broccoli, pork chops, rissole potatoes, rice pilaf, gravy, calico corn, club spinach, fried okra, fruit medley, kidney bean salad, bean soup, chicken gumbo, chili and buffalo wings.

Sunday

Lunch — tuna and noodles, sauerbraten, chicken breast filet parmesan, au gratin potatoes, rice, gravy, cauliflower combo, peas, fried cabbage, tomato salad, jellied spring salad, vegetable beef soup, Italian wedding soup, frontier chicken chili and cheese pizza.

Dinner — ginger barbecue chicken, fried shrimp, spinach lasagna, orange rice, mashed potatoes, gravy, black-eyed peas, lima beans, corn O'Brien, tomato salad, jellied spring salad, vegetable beef soup, Italian wedding soup, frontier chicken chili and cheese pizza.

Monday

Lunch — baked chicken, Swiss steak, baked Italian sausage, peppers and onions, mashed potatoes, rice, gravy, broccoli polonaise, carrots, cornbread, cottage cheese salad, macaroni salad, chicken dumpling soup, chili, cannonball sandwich and chicken nuggets.

Dinner — turkey, cornbread, ham, raisin sauce, fish and fries, mashed potatoes, cornbread dressing, gravy, succotash, tempura vegetables, green beans, garden cottage cheese salad, macaroni salad, chicken dumpling soup, minestrone, chili with beans, cannonball sandwich and chicken nuggets.

Tuesday

Dinner — onion lemon baked fish, pork schnitzel steak, beef and spaghetti, garlic toast, baked and mashed potatoes, gravy, pinto beans, spinach, stewed tomatoes, spinach salad, waldorf salad, white chicken chili, seven-bean with ham soup, chicken noodle soup and steak and cheese subs.

Lunch — paprika beef, barbecue beef cubes, chicken fajitas, garlic toast, O'Brien potatoes, rice, gravy, cauliflower, corn on the cob, lima beans, waldorf salad, spinach salad, white chicken chili, seven-bean with ham soup, steak and cheese subs and tacos.

Wednesday

Lunch — fried chicken, cajun baked fish, jalapeno cornbread, barbecue ribs, rice, mashed potatoes, gravy, corn on the cob, okra and tomato gumbo, fried cabbage, cole slaw, garden cottage cheese salad, pasta fagioli soup, chicken tortilla soup, vegetarian chili, cheese fishwich and cheese pizza.

Dinner — pita pizzas, country-style steak, fried chicken, potatoes, gravy, fried cauliflower, bean combo, cabbage, coleslaw, cottage cheese salad, pasta fagioli soup, chicken tortilla soup, vegetarian chili, cheese fishwich and cheese pizza.

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